

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR:WALTER J. STOESEL, JR.

APPROVED BY S:LSEAGLEBURGER

DEPUTY SECRETARY

NSC - MR. SONNENFELDT

S/S- MR. GAMMON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL NATO CAPITALS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652:

TAGS: PFOR, US, BE

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

1. DURING SECRETARY'S OCTOBER 10 MEETING AND LUNCHEON WITH BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VAN ELSLANDE, DISCUSSION CENTERED ON POSSIBLE IMPACT OF MIDDLE EAST ON CSCE AND MBFR, CSCE PROBLEMS RELATING TO FREER MOVEMENT AND STAGE 3 SUMMIT, US-EC AND NATO DECLARATIONS AND YEAR OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENTS.

2. MIDDLE EAST IMPACT. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF MIDDLE EAST SITUATION VAN ELSLANDE ASKED WHETHER CRISIS WOULD AFFECT CSCE AND MBFR. SECRETARY REPLIED WE WOULD HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE IF THERE WERE A CONFRONTATION WITH SOVIETS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. IF THERE WERE, THIS WOULD AFFECT THE WHOLE GAMUT OF OUR RELATIONS. IF THERE WERE NO CONFRONTATION, THEN IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL. WE BELIEVE IT IS IN EVERYONE'S INTEREST TO KEEP THE SOVIETS AS DISENGAGED AS POSSIBLE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST.

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3. CSCE. VAN ELSLANDE THEN SAID BELGIUM BELIEVES CSCE WILL BE SUCCESS FOR THE WEST ONLY IF THERE IS A CERTAIN BALANCE AMONG ALL THREE BASKETS. BELGIANS BELIEVE REAL DETENTE POSSIBLE ONLY IF ECONOMIC AND HUMAN CONTACTS

COMPLEMENT PROGRAMS ON MILITARY AND SECURITY MEASURES, BUT THEY HAVE IMPRESSION AT TIMES THAT ONLY US INTEREST IS FIRST BASKET.

4. CAUTIONING THAT HIS REMARKS SHOULD NOT BE WIDELY CIRCULATED, SECRETARY SAID HE WOULD SPEAK FRANKLY ON THIS QUESTION. AS A HISTORIAN, SECRETARY SAID HE HAS SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT PROPOSITION THAT PROLIFERATION OF HUMAN CONTACTS WILL PRODUCE PEACE. RELATIVELY FREE TRAVEL PRIOR TO WORLD WAR I, FOR EXAMPLE, DID NOT PRECLUDE 1914 OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES. US POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS WILL BE TO STATE OUR RESPECT FOR THEM, AND ADVOCATE THEIR FURTHERANCE, IF POSSIBLE. OUR FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE TO OBTAIN WHAT IS OBTAINABLE. WE HAVE TO AVOID A SITUATION IN AMERICA WHERE WE TALK OURSELVES INTO BELIEVING THAT TALKS WITH THE USSR BECOME A PRECONDITION FOR FLOURISHING OF HUMAN FREEDOM IN THE SOVIET UNION. WE WANT A MINIMUM OF DRAMA AND NEED TO AVOID A GREAT CONFRONTATION. AN ADDITIONAL CONCERN IN CSCE IS THAT IT NOT UNDERMINE NATO. THUS, WE ARE RESTRICTING OUR THIRD BASKET AMBITIONS. IF WE CAN GET OVER THIS PROBLEM, THEN OUR HOPE IS THAT THE CONFERENCE WILL END WITH A MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS, NOT A SUMMIT.

5. SUMMIT POSSIBILITY. VAN ELSLANDE SAID BELGIANS HAD IMPRESSION US FAVORED A SUMMIT. SECRETARY REPLIED US VIEW HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT LEVEL OF THE FINAL CONFERENCE SHOULD BE DETERMINED BY RESULTS ACHIEVED DURING STAGE 2 TALKS IN GENEVA.

6. NATO. VAN ELSLANDE NOTED THAT SOME PEOPLE IN HIS PARTY FELT BELGIUM SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM NATO, SINCE THEY THINK DETENTE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED, THUS DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT IS NO LONGER NECESSARY. THE SECRETARY SAID THIS WOULD BE A GREAT MISTAKE, BUT REGRETTED THAT SOME OF SAME FEELING EXISTS IN US.

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7. TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS. VAN ELSLANDE STRESSED EUROPE'S ACCOMPLISHMENT IN BEING ABLE TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE IN US/EC DECLARATION. HE REALIZED US CONSIDERED DOCUMENT "THIN," BUT UNDERLINED ITS IMPORTANCE. THE SECRETARY APPRECIATED DECLARATION AS HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT, WHICH US DOES NOT WISH TO DENIGRATE. HOWEVER, BOTH PROCEDURES AND SUBSTANCE HAVE CREATED CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES. PROCEDURALLY, IT WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO US THAT, DURING FOUR-MONTH PERIOD, NO EUROPEAN WOULD TALK TO US WHILE NINE WERE FORMULATING THEIR POSITION. AS FOR SUBSTANCE, IN FIRST DRAFT THE NINE ASKED US TO RECOGNIZE "EUROPEAN IDENTITY"--A CONCEPT WE HAD BEEN THE PRINCIPAL COUNTRY TO FOSTER. PRESENTLY, HOWEVER, BOTH PROCEDURE AND CONTENT

ARE BEING TREATED BY POLITICAL DIRECTORS AND US REPRESENTATIVES, AND SITUATION IS MUCH BETTER.

8. SECRETARY POSED QUESTION OF WHAT WE WANT FROM A DECLARATION. FOR ONE THING, WE WISH TO MAKE CLEAR THAT RELATIONS WITH OUR FRIENDS ARE IMPORTANT. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT DOES NOT NEED TO GO TO EUROPE FOR DOMESTIC REASONS. IF HE IS TO GO, HOWEVER, GROUND SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PREPARED BY A COOPERATIVE PROCESS. PUBLIC OPINION MUST UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER AND THAT RESULTS WILL BE WORTHWHILE. WE SHOULD PARTICULARLY TRY TO PREVENT LOOSE TALK TO THE PRESS. VAN ELSLANDE THOUGHT IT OPPORTUNE TO RE-LAUNCH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE AT THIS JUNCTURE, NOTING THAT EUROPEANS HAVE ACHIEVED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF UNITY, BUT THEY HAVE IMPRESSION THIS UNITY IS NOT VERY WELCOME IN US. EUROPE CONTEMPLATES DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN NINE AND US, WHEREAS US WANTS "PARTNERSHIP." MEANTIME, BILATERAL CONTACTS CONTINUE, AND BELGIANS VALUE THEIR GOOD AND FRANK DISCUSSIONS WITH US AMBASSADOR IN BRUSSELS. THERE ARE SOME SUBJECTS, NONETHELESS, ON WHICH EUROPE MUST CONCERT ITS VOICE BEFORE IT TALKS TO US. THE SECRETARY COMMENDED EFFORTS OF BELGIAN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING DAVIGNON, TO WORK
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ON A CONSTRUCTIVE TRACK, BUT REITERATED EUROPE STILL DOES NOT HAVE ONE FOREIGN MINISTER TO SPEAK FOR IT. US SIMPLY ASKS FOR OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE ITS VIEWS KNOWN BEFORE EUROPE ARRIVES AT DECISIONS. (AT THIS POINT SECRETARY WAS CALLED AWAY FROM THE DISCUSSION AND DID NOT RETURN.)

9. FORMS OF CONSULTATION. DAVIGNON BELIEVED US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS MAKING PROGRESS SINCE EUROPEANS CAN PRESENTLY SPEAK TO US EITHER IN FRAMEWORK OF THE NINE OR BILATERALLY. SONNENFELDT SUGGESTED THAT IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR US TO TALK WITH CHAIRMAN OF EC POLITICAL GROUP, PROVIDED THERE WERE A VALID INTERLOCUTOR. STRAUZ-HUPE ASKED IF NEXT DAVIGNON REPORT MIGHT BE DEVOTED TO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN US-EC DIALOGUE. DAVIGNON DOUBTED THIS AND SUGGESTED NEXT REPORT, POSSIBLY DUE IN 1974, WOULD MORE LIKELY CONCENTRATE ON EUROPEAN IDENTITY. HE THOUGHT NEXT EUROPE

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